

Fairfax MRC News

A program of the Fairfax County Health Department

July 2014

medical
reserve
corps



Fairfax County Launches New Emergency Notification System

Fairfax County has replaced the Community Emergency Alert Network (CEAN) with Fairfax Alerts and has launched Fairfax Volunteer Alerts as part of the new system. Fairfax Volunteer Alerts is an emergency notification and communication tool specifically for Fairfax County volunteer programs, such as the Medical Reserve Corps, that support the county during emergencies.

Fairfax Volunteer Alerts offers users enhanced alert features and new functionality to ease the sending and management of alerts by the MRC Program Office. Through Fairfax Volunteer Alerts, the Fairfax MRC will be able to quickly notify volunteers via email, text and phone in the event of an emergency or during a notification exercise. In addition, the new system will enable volunteers to respond directly from their mobile device, phone or email to indicate their availability.

Fairfax Volunteer Alerts allow MRC volunteers to respond to alerts more quickly and program staff to gather availability information much more quickly and efficiently. Volunteers will receive alerts via phone, text or email, as indicated in the VMS profile; volunteers can respond directly from the message or phone call (see examples below). Volunteer Alerts will also enable the MRC program office to alert volunteers using all communication methods at one time

and continue to send alerts until a response is received. Replying to the first message you receive will prevent repeat alerts via other communication methods, such as other phone numbers, text message or email addresses in your VMS profile.

Additionally, Fairfax Volunteer Alerts standardizes the "from" address in every message sent; email messages will come from a standard email header "Fairfax Volunteer Alerts," text messages will come from a standard phone number "893-61," and phone calls will come from phone number (571) 350-1390, allowing

you to set a contact for the emergency alert system.

In July, the Fairfax MRC will conduct its next quarterly notification drill using Fairfax Volunteer Alerts to provide you with an opportunity to practice using the new system. Following the drill, we will conduct a post-event survey for your input on how the new system worked. We are looking forward to your feedback!

continued on page 4

Volunteer Alerts sent by email will come from "Fairfax Volunteer Alerts," while text messages will come from "893-61."



MRC volunteers can respond directly to email and text messages and indicate their availability.

HDMRC@fairfaxcounty.gov
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/MRC
703-246-8641 TTY 711

In this issue:

Measles Investigation	2
MRC fiscal Goals	2
OEP Update	3
Decline in Response Rates	3
VMS Log Book	4
Training Update	4
Volunteer Snapshot	5

Fairfax MRC Assists with Measles Investigation

In May, the Fairfax County Health Department, the Virginia Department of Health and health districts in Maryland and the District of Columbia investigated potential exposures to measles throughout the National Capitol Region after two individuals were diagnosed with the disease.

Measles is highly communicable, with greater than 90 percent secondary attack rates among susceptible persons. Fortunately, most individuals who are exposed have protection from measles because they were vaccinated or their disease history. In this recent case, the second person who was diagnosed with measles was a close contact of the first person, which indicated that transmission of the virus occurred. Both people traveled to 20 different public locations throughout region during their infection periods, potentially exposing others to the disease.

In addition to coordinating laboratory testing, the Fairfax County Health Department (FCHD) opened its call center to proactively call more than 1,600 contacts who may have been exposed to the virus and to respond to concerns from members of the public. Fifty MRC volunteers assisted in the call center, serving over 400 hours during the investigation.



MRC volunteer Ruth DeJong assists in call center.

The investigation provided an excellent opportunity to partner with the Virginia Department of Health and other Northern Virginia health districts. There was also broad participation by staff from diverse areas of the Fairfax County Health Department and the MRC, who collectively logged over 3,000 hours in support of this effort.

MRC Fiscal Year Goals

In January, the MRC program office outlined three goals for the Fairfax MRC to focus on through the end of this fiscal year (June 2014). Now that we have reached this milestone, we want to highlight our progress on reaching these goals:

1. Increase the number of MRC volunteers who have completed Basic Training (MRC Orientation, IS 100/700) from 21 to 50 percent.
 - Through a combination of re-classifying volunteers who have failed to meet the Fairfax MRC training and activity requirements in the last 2 years to "Inactive Status," and a concerted effort working with "Pending" volunteers to help them meet the Basic Training requirements, 85 percent of our volunteers have now completed Basic Training Requirements.
2. Increase the number of MRC volunteers who participate in one or more activities per year (a MRC requirement) from 54 to 65 percent.
 - As of June 25, 64 percent of MRC volunteers have participated in one or more activity between January 1 and June 25, 2014. As we continue throughout the year, this number should continue to increase as members continue to meet their activity requirement. Members who do not participate in at least one activity per calendar year will be re-classified to "Inactive" Status.
3. Initiate the strategic planning process.
 - The Fairfax County Health Department strategic plan was completed in June. The MRC program is an integral part of the vision and goals of the plan. We are in the process of reviewing this plan and will determine how we can best develop a three-year "roadmap" for the MRC program based on goals established in the FCHD strategic plan, which will be published in the coming months.

So, what is next? Over the next three months, we will work to develop a "roadmap" workgroup, and may reach out to some of you to assist. This roadmap will outline the MRC program's three year goals and objectives and outline how we plan to achieve these goals. Please keep your eye out for MRC roadmap updates in the fall newsletter!

Office of Emergency Preparedness Update

Marc Barbieri, MPH, CEM, VP
Public Health Emergency
Management Coordinator



The summer of 2014 is off to a busy start for the Fairfax County Health Department, the Office of Emergency Preparedness (OEP) and the Fairfax Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)! As many of you know, we recently demobilized our incident command structure after spending several weeks responding to a measles investigation. Thank you to those of you that assisted us in that response. Now we are working to find new ways to engage and involve our active volunteers, as well as ensuring that our newer volunteers have opportunities to complete their basic training requirements.

No sooner than we ended our response to a real-world emergency, we participated in a simulated one—VERTEX 2014. This statewide exercise tested our response to a major hurricane that threatened Fairfax County, requiring emergency shelters to house displaced individuals. And, we are preparing for an exercise in August to test the State Managed Shelter at George Mason University. Many of you will participate in that exercise, serving as evacuees or

staffing various positions at the shelter.

The Fairfax County Health Department is finalizing its strategic plan, which will be released shortly. This plan will help guide our agency over the coming five years as we work to meet the needs of the community we serve. This document will also help us work on programmatic goals for OEP and the MRC. Be on the lookout for the release of the Health Department's new strategic plan in the coming weeks!

The Health Department has also begun the application process for accreditation from the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). This rigorous assessment will take place over the next year or so and will involve a number of different programs here at the Health Department including our emergency preparedness efforts. Currently, a number of public health agencies in Virginia are working toward accreditation.

Although it is a year away, planning has already begun for the World Police and Fire Games. Fairfax County will host the world next year and the event will be yet another opportunity for the Fairfax MRC to support the Health Department. There will be a number of ways that Fairfax MRC volunteers can get involved in the games, so stay tuned for more information.

In the meantime, if you have any questions, I can be reached at marc.barbieri@fairfaxcounty.gov. Once again, thank you for being part of the Fairfax MRC!

Decline in Response Rates in MRC Notification Drills

Since the fall of 2013, the Fairfax MRC has conducted quarterly notification drills to measure the capacity of the MRC to respond during emergencies and the effectiveness of our communication methods. Notification drills are sent to all "Active" volunteers—typically via email or text message.

Following each drill, the MRC Program Office calculates the response rate to find the number of volunteers who responded and the number who were available if it were a real emergency. We strive for the highest response rate possible; currently our goal is to achieve a 65 percent response rate (reporting available or not available) for notification drills with a 35 percent availability rate. Not only do higher response and availability rates indicate a larger pool of MRC resources would be available to assist in a real emergency, they also tell us that we are reaching you effectively.

Response rates peaked in the fall notification drill (52%) when volunteers received follow-up calls if they did not

respond to the drill within 3 hours. Since then, response rates declined (30% winter notification drill; 29% spring notification drill) when we relied on email notifications and on volunteers to log into VMS to indicate availability. This tells us that email and VMS are not the most effective tools to communicate with volunteers during emergencies. [Post-Event Summaries](#) of each of the last two notification drills can be found on the MRC website.

To create a more effective emergency communication system, the Fairfax MRC will begin utilizing the Volunteer Alert Network this July. Similar to Fairfax Alerts for Fairfax County residents, the Volunteer Alert Network will streamline communication through your phone, text and email. The system will allow you to respond with availability directly from your phone, email or mobile device. By utilizing this new system, we hope to make the emergency notification process much more efficient and easier for MRC volunteers. More information on the Volunteer Alert Network is on page 1 of this newsletter.

continued on page 4

What is the Log Book in VMS?

The Log Book is the easiest way to view all of the Fairfax MRC activities in which you have participated, including trainings, exercises and activations. To view all of your information, first adjust the start date on the top of the screen to the year you joined the MRC (pictured right). If you have any questions or issues accessing your Log Book, please contact the MRC Program Office at HDMRC@FairfaxCounty.gov or 703-246-8641, TTY 711.

LOG BOOK for Kelly Bachand

Start Date: Apr 7 2003 End Date: Apr 7 2014 Go

Rows to display All of 3

HD Call Center		Approval Status	Approved Hours	Hours	
Fairfax Medical Reserve Cor	18 Mar 2014, 8:45 am	Yes, Approved	0.5	0.5	
Total		N/A	0.5	0.5	
VDR- Mass Fatality Response					
		Approval Status	Approved Hours	Hours	Service Performed
Fairfax Medical Reserve Cor	07 Mar 2013, 6:00 pm	Yes, Approved	2	2	NA
	17 Mar 2014, 6:00 am	Yes, Approved	6	6	test
Total		N/A	8	8	N/A

Log Book Summary

Hours	8.5
Approved Hours	8.5
Service Performed	N/A

Printable View

Training Update

Training Calendar Released

The Fairfax MRC is excited to release the updated [2014 Training Calendar](#). Highlights in this calendar include offering additional sessions for trainings like Deafness and Hearing Loss: The Communication Challenges for Emergency Responders and ICS Safety Officer Orientation. Additionally, the Fairfax MRC is happy to offer the Introduction to Interpreting for Emergency Responders to volunteers who speak a language other than English fluently, Safety Officer Orientation and more training opportunities over the next six months.

The Fairfax MRC strives to increase opportunities for "Pending Volunteers" to complete their Basic Training requirement by providing evening and weekend IS 100/700 course offerings and the MRC Orientation course throughout the county. We also partner with the Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management to offer additional opportunities to complete FEMA ICS/NIMS Basic Training requirements with other volunteers and staff from departments throughout the county.

Also featured on this training are three special trainings previously offered to Health Department staff on Chemical, Radiological, Nuclear and high-yield Explosives (CBRNE) topics. These three webinars are offered in partnership with the Virginia Department of Health. Each is less than an hour in length and available 24/7 on TRAINVa. Interested volunteers can access each course using the course codes and links available on the [Training Calendar](#).

Emergency Notification System

continued from page 1

Because all contact information for this system will be taken directly from the volunteers' account in VMS, it is critical that you maintain updated contact information in VMS, including all phone numbers, email addresses and text message selections.

Fairfax Volunteer Alerts will only provide notifications sent by the Fairfax MRC and **NOT** notifications for weather hazards, traffic or information regarding government closings. MRC Volunteers **must** sign up for Fairfax Alerts to receive weather, traffic and other important notifications from Fairfax County at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/alerts/.

Decline in Response Rates

continued from page 3

Finally, the MRC Program Office will always differentiate between an exercise/drill or emergency response in the title and body of a message; for example, ***FFX MRC EXERCISE*** or ***FFX MRC ACTIVATION***.

Both drills and activation messages require a response from every "Active" volunteer.

If you have any questions regarding notification drills or activations, contact the MRC program office at HDMRC@FairfaxCounty.gov or 703-246-8641, TTY 711.

Stay Informed!

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/blog
www.CapitalRegionUpdates.gov
Fairfax County Office of Emergency
Management Newsletter

CALLING ALL ACTORS!

Patriot's Rise State Managed Shelter Exercise

Don't miss out!

Register as an actor-victim for the upcoming State Managed Shelter Exercise on August 19, 2014!

Shifts: 12:30-3 p.m. or 2-4:30 p.m.
(1 shift only please)

George Mason University

Under age 18 welcome with parent or guardian

Registration: www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0c44a9af22abfc1-actor

Questions: HDMRC@FairfaxCounty.gov



Fairfax MRC Snapshot

June 2014

Statistics of Note:

New Volunteers: 6

Total hours for month: 51

Volunteers participating in trainings and events: 25

Recent Activity:

1. MRC Orientation, June 11, 2014, 12 volunteers participated.
2. Environmental Health Overview, June 24, 2014, 11 volunteers participated.
3. Statewide Shelter Exercise: VERTEX, June 26, 2014, 2 volunteers participated.
4. [Training Calendar](#) updated and available online.

Upcoming Events:

1. **Medical Shelter Orientation**, July 17, 2014, 7 – 9 p.m., Active volunteers with RN license, TRAINVa course code: [1051688](#).
2. **Overhead High Voltage Safety Act** presentation, TRAINVa course code: [1043076](#), multiple sessions offered.

3. **FEMA IS 700**, July 22, 2014, 6:30 – 9:30 p.m., TRAINVa course code: [1042235](#).
4. **FEMA IS 100**, July 24, 2014, 6:30 – 9:30 p.m., TRAINVa course code: [1041751](#).
5. **Personal Preparedness Workshop**, August 13, 2014, 6:30 – 9:30 p.m. TRAINVa course code: [1048021](#).
6. SAVE THE DATE: **Ready-Set-Know Festival**, September 6 - 7, 2014.

Fairfax MRC News

The Fairfax MRC is a program of the Fairfax County Health Department.



A Fairfax County, Va., publication. 07/2014.

To request this information in an alternate format, please call the Health Department at 703-246-2411, TTY 711.